

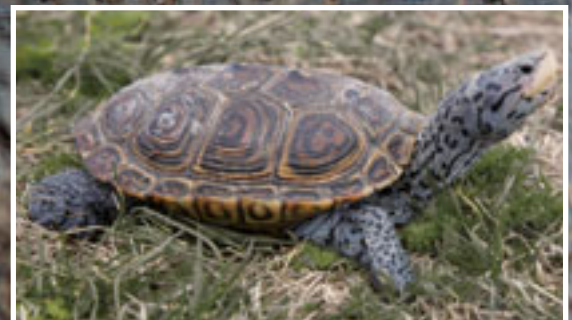
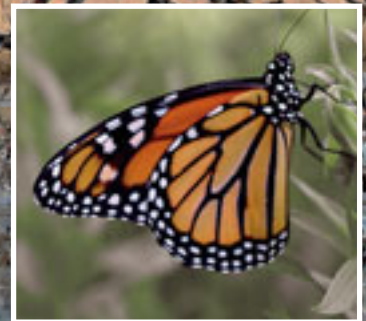


U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge

Comprehensive Conservation Plan

March 2010



Front cover:

Waterfowl on Hail Creek

Terry Willis

Northern diamondback terrapin

Ryan Haggerty/USFWS

Bald eagle

Steve Hillebrand/USFWS

Tundra swans

©Heather R. Davidson

Monarch butterfly

USFWS

Back cover:

Waterfowl on Hail Creek

Terry Willis



*This blue goose, designed by
J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become
the symbol of the National Wildlife
Refuge System.*

The *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service* is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 150-million acre National Wildlife Refuge System comprised of more than 550 national wildlife refuges and thousands of waterfowl production areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the Endangered Species Act, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance Program which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state wildlife agencies.

Comprehensive Conservation Plans provide long term guidance for management decisions and set forth goals, objectives, and strategies needed to accomplish refuge purposes and identify the Service's best estimate of future needs. These plans detail program planning levels that are sometimes substantially above current budget allocations and, as such, are primarily for Service strategic planning and program prioritization purposes. The plans do not constitute a commitment for staffing increases, operational and maintenance increases, or funding for future land acquisition.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge

Comprehensive Conservation Plan
March 2010

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3/5/2010

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3/24/10

Date

Acting



Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge

Comprehensive Conservation Plan *March 2010*

Abstract

Type of action: Administrative
U.S. Department of Interior

Lead agency: Fish and Wildlife Service

Responsible official: Marvin Moriarty, Regional Director, Region 5

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This Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the 2,286 acre Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge is the culmination of a planning effort involving several Maryland state agencies, local partners, refuge neighbors, private landowners, Friends of Eastern Neck, and the local community. This CCP establishes 15-year management goals and objectives for wildlife and habitats, public use, and administration and facilities.

Under this plan, we make improvements to our biological and public use programs. We prioritize our management activities for wildlife and habitats and the visitor services we provide in order to be more effective and efficient with our resources. We will improve our outreach and visibility on the refuge and in nearby communities through new or enhanced partnerships. We will also continue to work hard with our land conservation partners to help identify and protect valuable wildlife habitats. Finally, we will employ an adaptive management approach that includes adjusting our activities as results from management actions become better understood. This flexibility is especially important as we face ecological uncertainties, such as the predicted impacts of climate change.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge

Comprehensive Conservation Plan

Refuge Vision Statement

Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge will sustain diverse and healthy aquatic, tidal marsh, and uplands habitats to support robust populations of Federal trust species and remain an essential link in the network of conserved lands in the Chesapeake Bay. Our successes will be supported by the strong partnerships we develop with other Federal agencies, State agencies, conservation organizations, land managers, and neighboring communities. Working with those partners will provide the opportunity to showcase and demonstrate a science-based, adaptive management approach, with emphasis on the protection and restoration of shoreline and tidal marsh.

We will continue to reward all who visit with an opportunity to immerse themselves in the natural sights and sounds of the Chesapeake Bay. The thrill of observing more than 100,000 migrating and wintering waterfowl moving in and out of the refuge each year, including the rare tundra swan, is an experience that forms a lasting impression about the wonders of nature. Visitors will also be delighted by the refuge's healthy populations of bald eagles and ospreys as they dive for fish and attend to their young. They will also enjoy the opportunity to observe the phenomenon of over 100 species of birds migrating through each fall. We will enhance these and other refuge experiences by providing exceptional interpretive and visitor programs about the Chesapeake Bay and its rich diversity of natural and cultural resources.

We hope residents of neighboring communities on the Delmarva Peninsula will value the refuge for enhancing their quality of life. Within the National Wildlife Refuge System, the refuge will be treasured for conserving the Chesapeake Bay's Federal trust resources and providing inspirational outdoor experiences for present and future generations of Americans.

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